



**Michigan
Agri-Business
Association**

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Dear Representative,

I am writing on behalf of the Michigan Agri-Business Association, a trade association that represents more than 400 members spanning the agricultural supply chain, to express our concern with House Bill (HB) 4968.

We fully support the current law that requires planning commission members to disclose their conflicts of interest. We believe the requirement in current law is sufficient. Local planning commission members already are required to "disclose the potential conflict of interest to the planning commission." The law further states that members are disqualified from voting on a matter "if so provided by the bylaws or by a majority vote of the remaining members of the planning commission." In other words, there is already oversight over conflicts of interest among planning commission members.

The additional requirement could create a chilling effect on recruitment to local planning commissions in rural communities. Often, those who step up to lead on planning commissions are those who are most active in the local community, including owning property and businesses. Small towns struggle to find leaders willing to serve on planning commissions and fill other leadership posts, and we should not cut down on the pool of local leaders able to do so.

HB 4698 would make it even more difficult for local leaders to step up and serve rural Michigan communities. In addition, because current law already protects against conflicts of interest, HB 4698 is not necessary.

Sincerely,

Jim Byrum
President
Michigan Agri-Business Association